

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully considered the August 25, 2006 Office Action, and the comments that follow are presented in a bona fide effort to address all requirements raised in that Action and thereby place this case in condition for allowance. Claims 1-68 are pending in this application. Claims 63-68 have been withdrawn from consideration pursuant to the previous restriction requirement. Entry of the present response is respectfully solicited and prompt favorable reconsideration of this case is solicited.

Initially, Applicants respectfully request consideration of the Information Disclosure Statements (IDS) previously submitted on March 15, 2001 and October 18, 2006. The Examiner is requested to forward Applicants an appropriately initialed copy of the PTO-1449 forms with the next Office communication.

In the Office action dated August 25, 2006, the Examiner, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.105, required information regarding the following eight (8) companies:

1. World Wide Wood Network ([www.wwwood.net](http://www.wwwood.net))
2. WoodPlanet ([www.woodplanet.com](http://www.woodplanet.com))
3. eWood ([www.ewood.com](http://www.ewood.com))
4. LowGradeLumber ([www.lowgradelumber.com](http://www.lowgradelumber.com))
5. LumberMarket ([www.lumbermarket.com](http://www.lumbermarket.com))
6. PaperExchange ([www.paperexchange.com.au](http://www.paperexchange.com.au))
7. PaperX
8. Paperhub ([www.purebusiness.com](http://www.purebusiness.com))

In particular, the Examiner at pages 2-3 of the Office action, required answers to several interrogatories for each of the foregoing companies.

In response, Applicants initially submit that they are fully aware of their obligations under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56. Applicants further submit that other than the information provided above (seven web addresses), Applicants are not aware of the activities of the foregoing

companies or aware of any public use activities or publications by the foregoing companies. The web addresses were discovered as a result of Internet searches conducted after issuance of the Office action dated August 25, 2006. Moreover, Applicants are not aware of due diligence performed by Applicants which was directed to any one of these companies.

Furthermore, the Examiner, at page 4 of the Office action, required Applicants to state the specific improvements in claim 1 over the disclosed prior art and indicate the specific elements in the claimed subject matter that provide those improvements. In response, Applicants refer the Examiner to the present specification at page 1, wherein it is described that the present invention generally relates to trading in a market, and in particular to techniques for expediting the completion and accurate tracking of sales in such a market. Moreover, descriptions of conventional systems and the disadvantages associated with these conventional systems are provided in the Background section of the specification at pages 1-4.

At page 4 of the specification, Applicants disclosed that there is a need for a commodity trading system that provides timely and accurate information to traders, that constructs sales contracts efficiently and flexibly, that provides for the shipment of tangible goods, and that tracks the transaction until performance by both parties is completed. As described in the Summary section of the present specification (page 4), the foregoing needs, are achieved by the present invention, which comprises, in one aspect (claim 1), techniques for assisted trading in a market for commodities. A non-trading central authority is designated. The central authority screens entities to identify authorized traders. If agreement is subsequently indicated by input from each trader of at least two contracting traders among the authorized traders, then the central authority automatically constructs a standardized sales contract for the commodity. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the present specification discloses the deficiencies of

conventional trading systems and discloses how the present claimed subject matter is an improvement over these conventional systems.

Applicants submit that none of the present pending claims are drafted in a means or steps plus function format.

It is believed that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request an early and favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application. If there are any outstanding issues which might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' representative at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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